

HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE


MARVEL

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HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE



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ARE YOU
READY??

YES.

NO.

**FRANKLIN
RICHARDS.**

GALACTUS.

THE END OF TIME.

FINAL ENTROPY
ISN'T YET COMPLETE. I
CAN SENSE A FEW LAST
LIVING PARTICLES HERE
AND THERE.

THERE ARE
TWO LEFT IN THE
ANDROMEDA GALAXY.
EACH TERRIFIED OF
LEAVING THE OTHER
ALONE.

WE HAVE
A LITTLE TIME
BEFORE THE
UNIVERSE
DIES.

WHAT TROUBLES YOU?

FOR ONE THING, WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR BILLIONS OF YEARS.

I'LL MISS YOU, YOU'RE NOT AFRAID TO DIE?

IT IS MY PURPOSE, MY ENERGIES ARE ALL THAT REMAIN TO CREATE THE NEXT UNIVERSE.

YOUR NEW HOME.

AFTER I MOVE ON, I'LL STILL HAVE MY MEMORIES, WON'T I?

SORRY, YOU DON'T KNOW FOR SURE, I GET THAT, BUT IF IT'S ALL FORGOTTEN, THEN HOW DID ANY OF IT MATTER IN THE END?

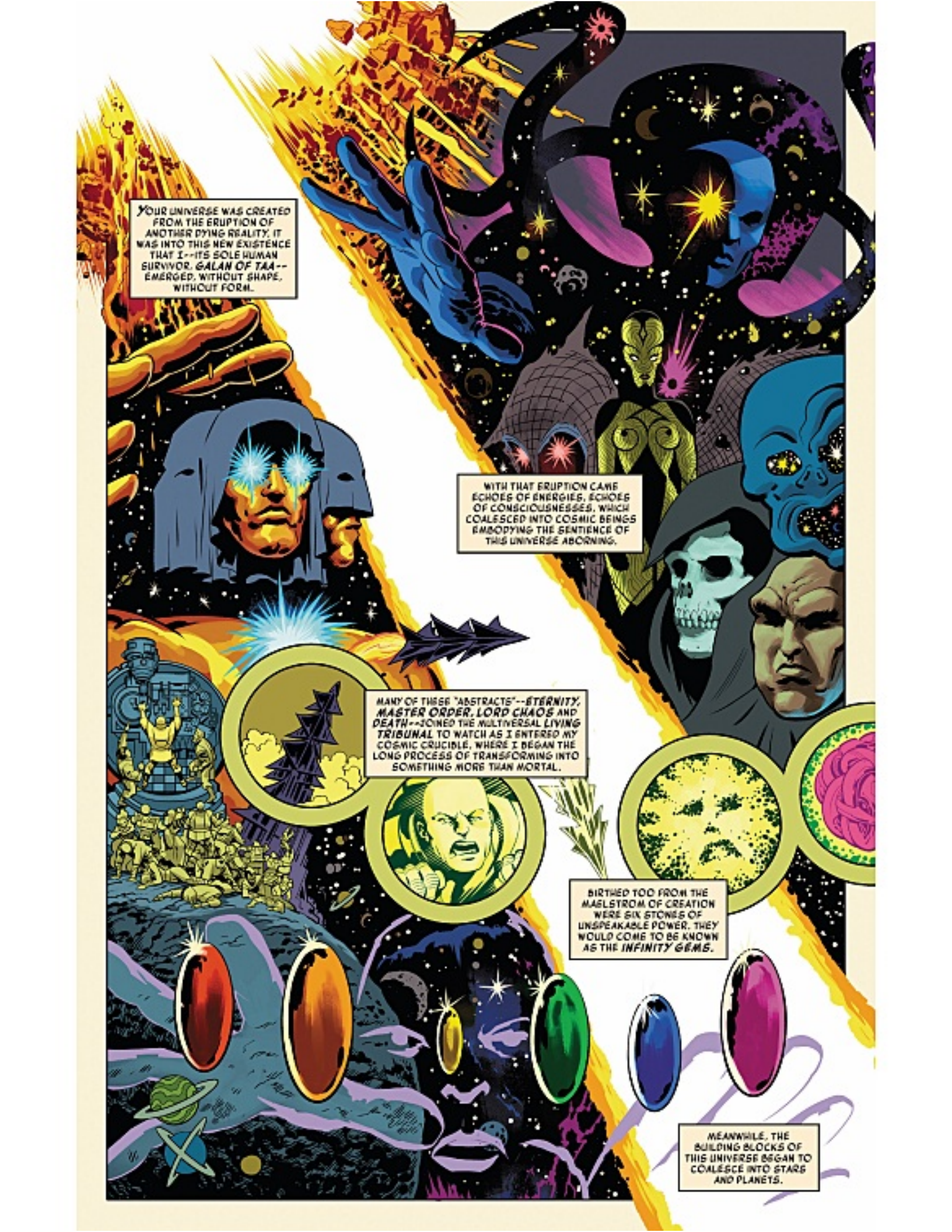
I WANT THE HISTORY OF THIS UNIVERSE TO HAVE MEANT SOMETHING. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME.

BEFORE I GO, HELP ME REMEMBER.

REMEMBER WHAT?

EVERYTHING.

VERY WELL...




YOUR UNIVERSE WAS CREATED FROM THE ERUPTION OF ANOTHER DYING REALITY. IT WAS INTO THIS NEW EXISTENCE THAT I--ITS SOLE HUMAN SURVIVOR, GALAN OF TAA--EMERGED, WITHOUT SHAPE, WITHOUT FORM.

WITH THAT ERUPTION CAME ECHOES OF ENERGIES, ECHOES OF CONSCIOUSNESSES, WHICH COALESCED INTO COSMIC BEINGS EMBODYING THE SENTIENCE OF THIS UNIVERSE ABORNING.

MANY OF THESE "ABSTRACTS"--ETERNITY, MASTER ORDER, LORD CHAOS AND DEATH--JOINED THE MULTIVERSAL LIVING TRIBUNAL TO WATCH AS I ENTERED MY COSMIC CRUCIBLE, WHERE I BEGAN THE LONG PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING INTO SOMETHING MORE THAN MORTAL.

BIRTHED TOO FROM THE MAELSTROM OF CREATION WERE SIX STONES OF UNSPEAKABLE POWER. THEY WOULD COME TO BE KNOWN AS THE INFINITY GEMS.

MEANWHILE, THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THIS UNIVERSE BEGAN TO COALESCE INTO STARS AND PLANETS.




FROM MY PREVIOUS HOME, OTHER VESTIGES REMAINED. ONE WAS KNOWN AS THE **PHOENIX FORCE**, A MANIFESTATION OF THE PRIME UNIVERSAL FORCE OF LIFE.

MATTER GATHERED BENEATH THE OTHER, THE **M'KRAAN CRYSTAL**, FORMING THE UNIVERSE'S FIRST PLANET.

ACROSS THE COSMOS, LIFE BEGAN TO DEVELOP. THE **ACANTI** AMONG THE FIRST. THE ACANTI WERE THE FIRST CURIOUS SENTIENTS, PASSIVE BEINGS ROAMING INTERGALACTIC SPACE IN PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.


THE EARLIEST SPECIES OF THEIR CREATION WERE SHORT-LIVED BUT DID NOT DIE IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE. THE LAST OF EACH, THE SELF-NAMED **ELDERS OF THE UNIVERSE**, DREW UPON THE WAXING LIFE ENERGIES OF THEIR PEOPLE TO CREATE A SHARED POWER PRIMORDIAL. THIS GAVE THE ELDERS VIRTUAL IMMORTALITY, ALLOWING THEIR RACES TO LIVE ON IN SPIRIT.



THE CELESTIALS WERE MORE AGGRESSIVE. THEY CHOSE THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS, AND THEIR IMPACT WOULD BE FELT TIME AND AGAIN AS THEY BEGAN SEEDING AND MANIPULATING LIFE THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY.

ETERNITY BEGAT EON, AN OTHERDIMENSIONAL MASTER OF QUANTUM ENERGY WHO WAS TASKED WITH APPOINTING PROTECTORS OF THE UNIVERSE.

AMONG THE OLDEST SPECIES IN EXISTENCE WAS THAT OF THE WATCHERS OF THE PLANET T-37X. AT FIRST EAGER TO SHARE THEIR INCALCULABLE WISDOM WITH A YOUNGER CIVILIZATION, THEY LOOKED ON AS THEIR IMMATURE RECIPIENTS TWISTED THEIR KNOWLEDGE INTO WEAPONS OF WAR, DESTROYING THEMSELVES. CONSEQUENTLY, THE WATCHERS MADE A SOLEMN VOW TO NEVER AGAIN INTERFERE WITH LIFE IN ANY FORM.




A DARK GALAXY SPANNED THE
INSECTOID RACE CALLED THE
BROOD, THE UNIVERSE'S
FIRST NATURAL PREDATORS.

THEY BEGAN INTERGALACTIC
CONQUEST BY ENSLAVING
THE ACANTI BEFORE
INFESTING NEIGHBORING
STAR SYSTEMS AND BUILDING
A FEARSOME EMPIRE.

MEANWHILE, I EMERGED FROM
MY INCUBATOR AS THE BEING
I AM TODAY: **GALACTUS**, THE
DEVOURER OF WORLDS.

TRAVELING IN MY
WORLDSHIP, TAA II, I
SOUGHT TO QUELL MY
INSATIABLE APPETITE
FOR ENERGY.



AROUND AN OTHERWISE
UNREMARKABLE YELLOW
STAR, THE EARTH
FORMED.

AMONG ITS FIRST
LIVING BEINGS WERE
THE ELDER GODS:
GAEA, THE MOTHER
OF EARTH.

OSHUR, GIVER OF
LIGHT AND JUSTICE:


SET, THE GREAT
DESTROYER:

AND CHTHON, THE
MYSTIC OF DARK MAGIC,
WHOSE SPELLS WOULD
SURVIVE FOR EONS ON
INDESTRUCTIBLE SCROLLS.

YGGDRASIL, THE WORLD TREE,
SPROUTED AN ENERGY FIELD THAT
SUPPORTED AND CONNECTED
ADJOINING DIMENSIONS. YGGDRASIL
WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE CREATION
OF THE ASGARDIAN GODS, WHOSE
CIVILIZATION WOULD ROUTINELY BE
OBLITERATED AND RESULT IN A
CYCLE CALLED RAGNAROK.


DEMONS STRODE THE YOUNG
EARTH. PRIMARY AMONG THEM, THE
BEAST, BRINGER OF NIHILISM,
THOUGH HIS INFLUENCE WAS
AT FIRST MINIMAL, IT WOULD
ONE DAY MANIFEST IN A
MOST VICIOUS MANNER.

THE CELESTIAL KNOWN AS THE
PROGENITOR CRASH-LANDED ON
EARTH AS A RESULT OF A SENTIENT
INFECTION KNOWN AS THE
HORDE. AFTER DYING BENEATH
THE ARCTIC ICE, IT WOULD BECOME
KNOWN AS CELESTIAL ZERO.



ELSEWHERE IN THE ANDROMEDA GALAXY, THE CELESTIALS PERFORMED GENETIC EXPERIMENTS ON A REPTILIAN RACE, CREATING THE SHAPE-SHIFTING **SKRULLS**, WHOSE WARLIKE NATURE WOULD EVENTUALLY THREATEN THE EARTH TIME AND AGAIN.

ANOTHER STRAIN OF ALIENS, THE **NUWALLI**, USED ADVANCED SCIENCE TO CREATE A "GAME PRESERVE" IN EARTH'S ANTARCTIC REGION. IT WAS STOCKED WITH EARTHLY LIFE OF THE TIME, INCLUDING EARLY DINOSAURS. THOUGH EARTH'S FAUNA AND FLORA WOULD TRANSFORM GREATLY OVER THE NEXT HUNDREDS OF MILLENNIA, THIS SECRET "**SAVAGE LAND**" WOULD REMAIN UNINVOLVED.




ACROSS THE COSMOS, ON THE PLANET CHANDILAR, AN AVIAN-DESCENDED HUMANOID RACE CALLED THE SHI'AR EMBRACED THE ART OF WAR. EVENTUALLY, THEY WOULD COMMAND THE LARGEST EMPIRE IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

ON THE PLANET KALA IN THE LARGE MAGELLANIC CLOUD, AN EONS-OLD RACE CALLED THE PROGENITORS EXPERIMENTED ON THE PRIMITIVE KREE, CREATING BLUE-SKINNED "PUREBRED" KREE AND A LARGER TRIBE OF PALE-SKINNED SAVAGES WHO WERE LATER VISITED BY THE SKRULLS.

THE SKRULLS OFFERED THE PALE KREE TECHNOLOGY IN EXCHANGE FOR PLANETARY RESOURCES, TESTING THEIR METTLE BY HAVING THEM BUILD AN OUTPOST ON EARTH'S MOON.

THIS "BLUE AREA" WOULD LONG GO UNINHABITED AFTER THE KREE TURNED ON THE SKRULLS, SPARKING A WAR BETWEEN THEIR WORLDS THAT WOULD LAST FOR MILLENNIA.

IN THE ANDROMEDA GALAXY, THE PLANET XANDAR, WARY OF THE SHI'AR AND OTHER EMPIRES, CREATED ITS DEFENSE WITH THE UNIVERSE'S FIRST SPACE MILITIA: THE NOVA CORPS, OVERSEEN BY THE WORLDMIND, A SENTIENT SUPERCOMPUTER CONTAINING THE ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE OF ALL XANDAR.



THE CELESTIALS, INTRIGUED BY THE MALLEABILITY OF THE HUMAN RACE, SENT THE FIRST HOST TO PERFORM GENETIC EXPERIMENTS THAT YIELDED THE ADVANCED ETERNALS AND THE GROTESQUE DEVIANTS.

THE ETERNALS, LED BY KRONOS, SECLUDED THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO SECRETLY PROTECT EARTH WITH THEIR NEWFOUND ABILITIES, WHILE THE BRUTISH DEVIANTS ESTABLISHED AN EMPIRE IN THE KINGDOM OF LEMURIA.

THE REST OF THE PLANET WAS NOT WITHOUT ITS NATIVE PROTECTORS, HOWEVER.



AN ASGARDIAN GOD NAMED ODIN, HEARING THE END OF HIS MOST RECENT LIFE CYCLE, WOULD TRAVEL TO EARTH TO JOIN AGAMOTTO, BLACK PANTHER, GHOST RIDER, IRON FIST, LADY PHOENIX AND STARBRAND. TOGETHER, THEY WOULD BE THE FIRST AVENGERS.

OTHER RACES BECAME AWARE OF THE GENETIC POTENTIAL INVESTED IN VARIOUS SPECIES BY THE CELESTIALS.

THE KREE MUTATED VARIOUS RACES ACROSS THE UNIVERSE TO SERVE AS SOLDIERS.

ONE SUCH GROUP, DRAWN FROM THE HUMAN RACE AND KNOWN AS THE INHUMANS, MADE THEIR HOME IN THE ISLAND CITY OF ATTILAN.



TUK, THE FIRST OFFSPRING OF THE INHUMANS, LIVED AMONG THE MORTALS.



HIS UNIQUE GENETIC CODE, PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS, INCREASED ORDINARY HUMANS' SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MUTATION.

THE PLODEX SENT AN UNATTENDED BIO-SHIP TO EARTH TO BEGIN THEIR OWN EXPERIMENTS. THE LONE HUMAN WHO DISCOVERED THE SHIP, ESHU, BECAME ITS TEST SUBJECT FOR FORCED EVOLUTION.



THE 30,000-YEAR PROCESS WAS AGONIZING AND RESULTED IN ESHU HAVING TO CREATE HIS OWN GENETICALLY PERFECT BODY.



THEREAFTER, HE REFERRED TO HIMSELF AS THE MASTER OF THE WORLD.





HUMANS DISCOVERED CITHON'S LONG-LOST SCROLLS AND USED THEM TO CREATE VARNAE, THE FIRST VAMPIRE.



SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE CELESTIALS APPEARED ONCE AGAIN, THEIR *SECOND* HOST HAVING JUDGED THE DEVIANTS AS FAILURES.




THE CELESTIALS CREATED A GREAT CATAclysm MASSIVE ENOUGH THAT IT NOT ONLY SANK LEMURIA BENEATH THE WAVES BUT ALSO PLUNGED THE CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS TO THE OCEAN'S FLOOR.




A MERE FRACTION OF THEIR INHABITANTS SURVIVED AFTER ADAPTING THEIR BODIES TO LIFE UNDER THE SEA AS WATER BREATHERS.






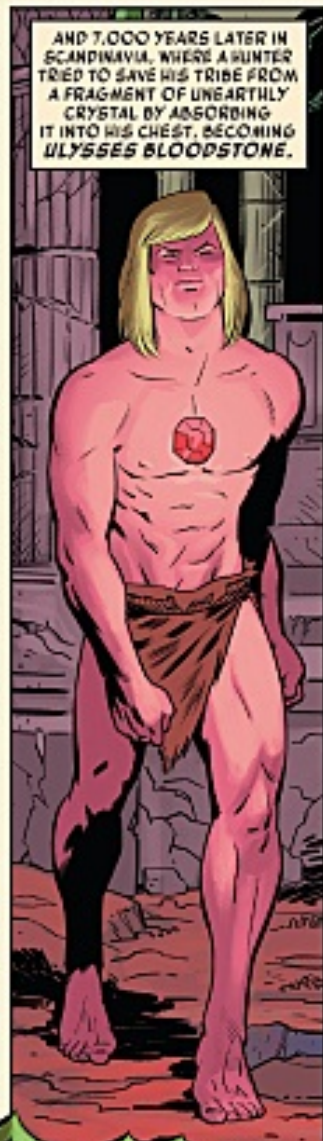
ELSEWHERE, MORTAL CIVILIZATIONS BEGAN TO RECOGNIZE A NEW GENERATION OF GODS--ANNUNAKI, EGYPTIAN, OLYMPIAN AND MORE. THE ASGARDIANS, WORSHIPPED BY THE NORSE, EMERGED FROM THEIR MOST RECENT RAGNAROK CYCLE REBORN.




MYSTICISM ON EARTH FLOURISHED AS AGAMOTTO, AFTER MANY MILLENNIA, PASSED ON HIS TITLE OF SORCERER SUPREME TO ANOTHER.



IMMORTALITY MANIFESTED TWICE IN RELATIVELY SHORT ORDER: IN CENTRAL EUROPE, WITH A SUPERHUMAN NAMED SELENE GALLIO, ONE OF EARTH'S FIRST MUTANTS.



AND 7,000 YEARS LATER IN SCANDINAVIA, WHERE A HUNTER TRIED TO SAVE HIS TRIBE FROM A FRAGMENT OF UNEARTHLY CRYSTAL BY ABSORBING IT INTO HIS CHEST, BECOMING ULYSSES BLOODSTONE.



THOUSANDS OF YEARS AFTER IT SANK, THE RUINS OF ATLANTIS WERE REBUILT BY THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ORIGINAL WATER BREATHERS, CREATING A VAST KINGDOM FOR THEIR PEOPLE.

IN ORDER TO ESCAPE DISCOVERY BY THE GROWING HUMAN RACE, THE INHUMANS RELOCATED THEIR CITY TO THE HIMALAYAS, TERMING IT THE GREAT REFUGE.

SOME WERE FURTHER ELEVATED WITH THE MUTAGENIC TERRIGEN MISTS, WHICH VISITED THEM WITH GREAT POWERS.

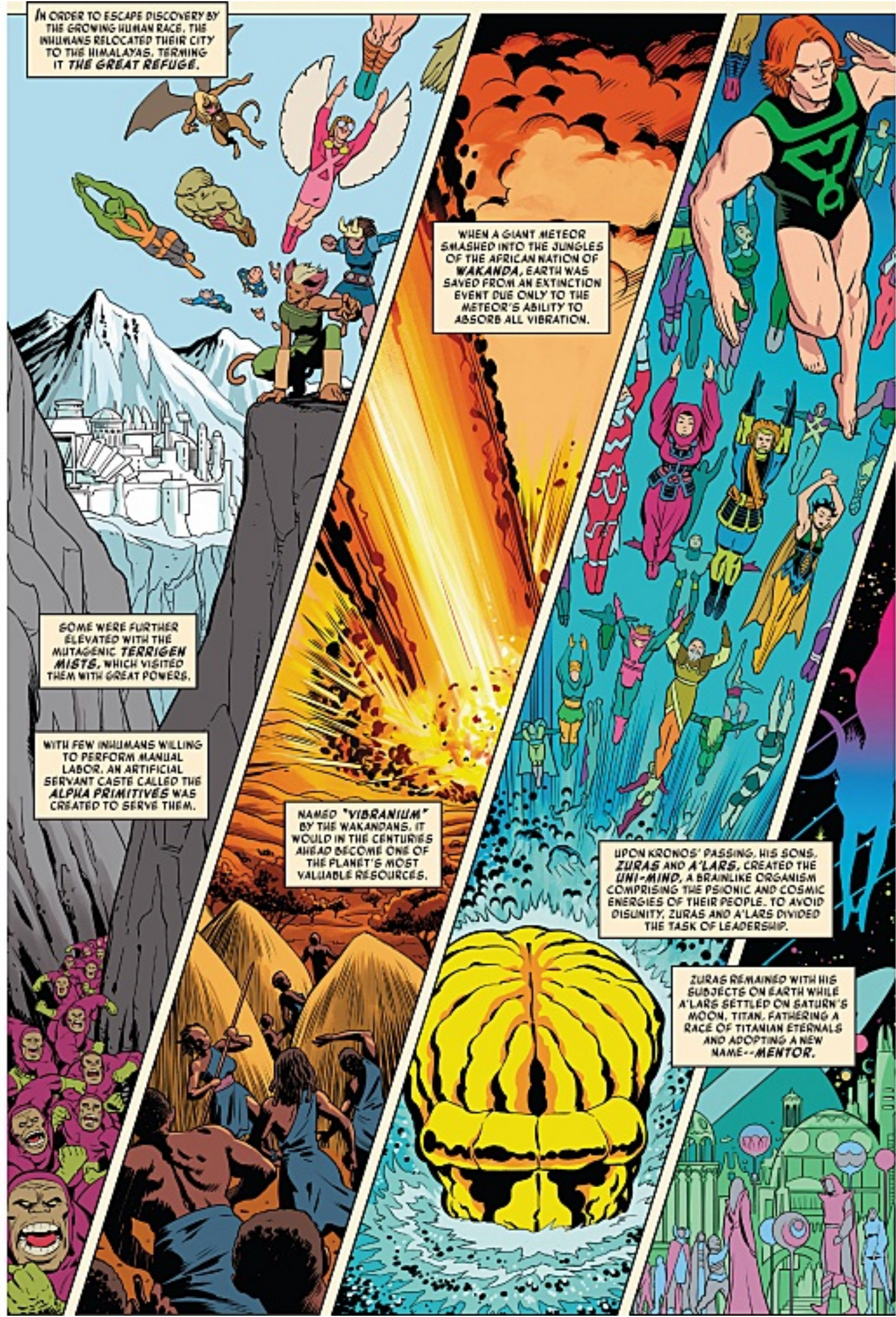
WITH FEW INHUMANS WILLING TO PERFORM MANUAL LABOR, AN ARTIFICIAL SERVANT CASTE CALLED THE ALPHA PRIMITIVES WAS CREATED TO SERVE THEM.

NAMED "VIBRANIUM" BY THE WAKANDANS, IT WOULD IN THE CENTURIES AHEAD BECOME ONE OF THE PLANET'S MOST VALUABLE RESOURCES.

WHEN A GIANT METEOR SMASHED INTO THE JUNGLES OF THE AFRICAN NATION OF WAKANDA, EARTH WAS SAVED FROM AN EXTINCTION EVENT DUE ONLY TO THE METEOR'S ABILITY TO ABSORB ALL VIBRATION.

UPON KRONOS' PASSING, HIS SONS, ZURAS AND A'LARS, CREATED THE UNI-MIND, A BRAINLIKE ORGANISM COMPRISING THE PSIONIC AND COSMIC ENERGIES OF THEIR PEOPLE. TO AVOID DISUNITY, ZURAS AND A'LARS DIVIDED THE TASK OF LEADERSHIP.

ZURAS REMAINED WITH HIS SUBJECTS ON EARTH WHILE A'LARS SETTLED ON SATURN'S MOON, TITAN, FATHERING A RACE OF TITANIAN ETERNALS AND ADOPTING A NEW NAME--MENTOR.





AS THE TITANIANS FLOURISHED, TO MENTOR AND SUI-SAN, TWO CHILDREN WERE BORN: THE CAREFREE **EROS** AND THE GROTESQUE **THANOS**, WHO WOULD LATER BECOME A UNIVERSAL MENACE OF SINGULAR POWER AND VISION.

IN A REMOTE REGION OF CHINA, A SHAPE-SHIFTER FROM THE PLANET KAKARANATHARA ARRIVED IN THE FORM OF A MIGHTY DRAGON. HE SLUMBERED FOR CENTURIES, AWAKENING PERIODICALLY TO PLAGUE MANKIND.

THE CHINESE NAMED HIM **FIN FANG FOOM**--"HE WHOSE LIMBS SHATTER MOUNTAINS AND WHOSE BACK SCRAPS THE SUN."

EGYPT BECAME THE NEXT PIVOTAL
LOCALE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
AS A SCIENTIST FRUSTRATED
BY HIS ERA'S COMPLACENCY
VISITED FROM THE 31ST
CENTURY. BECOMING THE RULER
RAMA-TUT, HE WOULD LATER
PLAY SEVERAL KEY ROLES
IN EARTH HISTORY UNDER
NUMEROUS GUISES.



HE WAS EVENTUALLY SUCCEEDED BY EN SABAH NUR,
THE MUTANT WHO HELPED IMHOTEP REPEL A
BROOD INVASION BEFORE EVENTUALLY EMBRACING
A NEW IDENTITY AS THE TYRANNICAL APOCALYPSE.



IMHOTEP
SUBSEQUENTLY
BANDIED TOGETHER
EARTH'S GREATEST
THINKERS TO FORM
THE BROTHERHOOD
OF THE SHIELD.

LATER, UNDER THE REIGN
OF RAMSES II, A COURT
WIZARD NAMED ANATH-NA
MUT HAPPENED UPON A
TEMPLE OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN.
INSIDE, THE MYSTICAL
KA STONE INBUED HIM WITH
VAST SUPERHUMAN POWERS
AND IMMORTALITY.



AS THE SPHINX,
HE EVENTUALLY
ASCENDED TO
COSMIC STATUS.

SECRET ORGANIZATIONS
BEGAN TO TAKE SHAPE AROUND
THE WORLD. THE MYSTICAL MARTIAL
ARTS ENCLAVE KNOWN AS **THE
CHASTE** WAS FOUNDED TO
COMBAT THE NINJA CLAN CALLED
THE HAND, WORSHIPPERS OF
THE ANCIENT BEAST.



SEEKING TO FATHER A SON WHOSE
POWER WOULD BE DERIVED BOTH
FROM ASGARD AND EARTH, ODIN
MATED WITH GAEA TO GIVE BIRTH
TO **THOR ODINSON**.

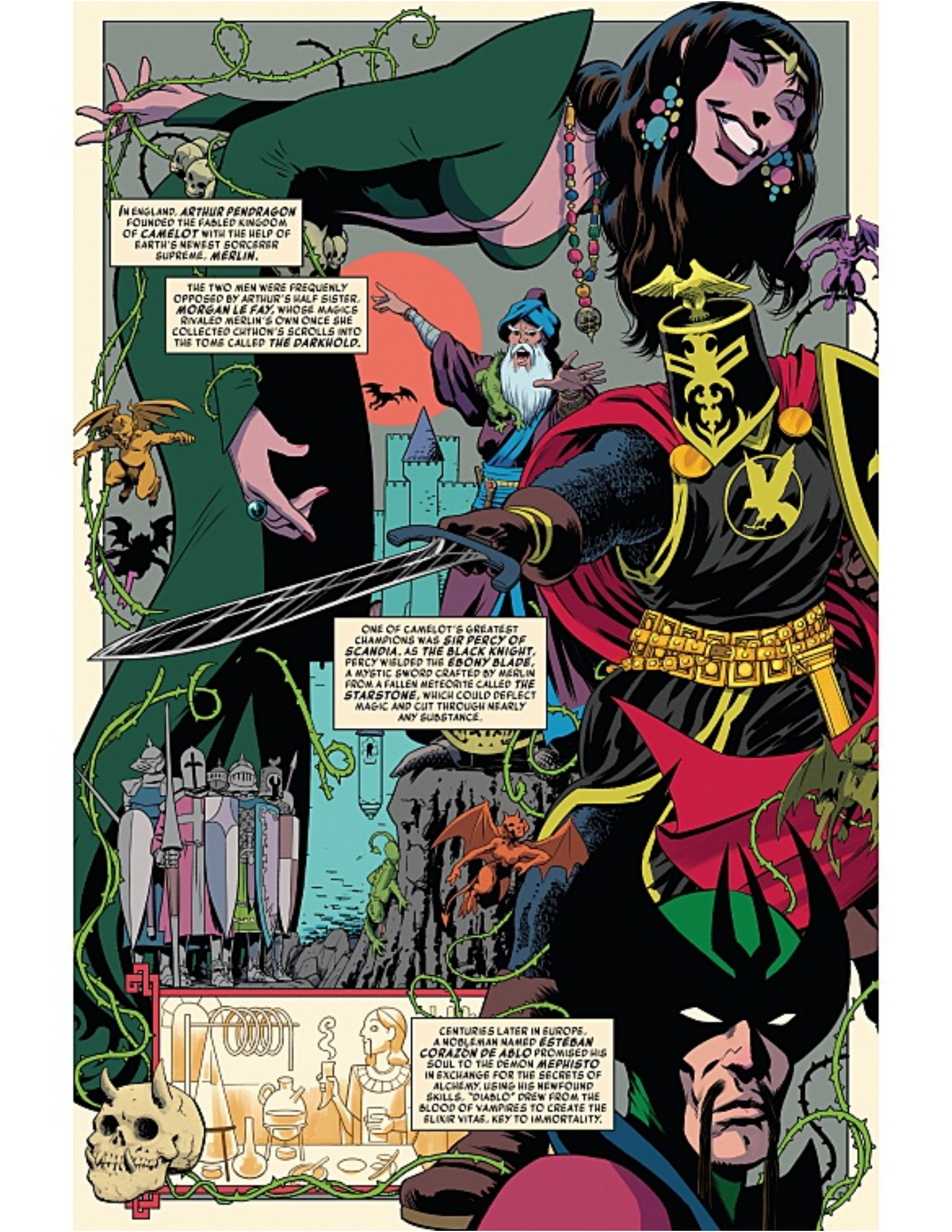


IN ROME, FORMER
EMPEROR **ROMULUS
AUGUSTULUS**, ALSO
KNOWN AS **TYRRANUS**, WAS
KEPT VITAL BY THE FOUNTAIN
OF YOUTH. HE DISCOVERED A
CLASS OF FORMER DEVIANT
SLAVES AND CLAIMED
RULE OVER THEIR REALM,
SUBTERRANEA.



WHEN A CELESTIAL'S
IMPENDING CHILD BIRTH
THREATENED EARTH,
ZHANG HENG OF THE
BROTHERHOOD OF THE
SHIELD ARRANGED FOR
IT TO GIVE BIRTH IN
THE SUN INSTEAD.






IN ENGLAND, ARTHUR PENDRAGON
FOUNDED THE FABLED KINGDOM
OF CAMELOT WITH THE HELP OF
EARTH'S NEWEST SORCERER
SUPREME, MERLIN.


THE TWO MEN WERE FREQUENTLY
OPPOSED BY ARTHUR'S HALF SISTER,
MORGAN LE FAY, WHOSE MAGIC
RIVALLED MERLIN'S OWN ONCE SHE
COLLECTED CITHON'S SCROLLS INTO
THE TOMB CALLED THE DARKWOLD.

ONE OF CAMELOT'S GREATEST
CHAMPIONS WAS SIR PERCY OF
SCANDIA. AS THE BLACK KNIGHT,
PERCY WIELDED THE EBONY BLADE,
A MYSTIC SWORD CRAFTED BY MERLIN
FROM A FALLEN METEORITE CALLED THE
STARSTONE, WHICH COULD DEFLECT
MAGIC AND CUT THROUGH NEARLY
ANY SUBSTANCE.


CENTURIES LATER IN EUROPE,
A NOBLEMAN NAMED ESTEBAN
CORAZON DE ABLO PROMISED HIS
SOUL TO THE DEMON MEPHISTO
IN EXCHANGE FOR THE SECRETS OF
ALCHEMY, USING HIS NEWFOUND
SKILLS, "DIABLO" DREW FROM THE
BLOOD OF VAMPIRES TO CREATE THE
ELNIR VITAS, KEY TO IMMORTALITY.




WHEN EARTH WAS VISITED BY THE **THIRD HOST** OF CELESTIALS, THE GODLIKE GIANTS UNINTENTIONALLY GARNERED THE WORSHIP OF SOME OF HUMANITY, DRAWING POWER AWAY FROM EARTH'S PANTHEONS.



CONFRONTED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNCIL OF GODHEADS-- ODIN, ZEUS AND VISHNU--THE THIRD HOST NEGOTIATED A THOUSAND-YEAR TRUCE OF NONINTERFERENCE.



TO PREPARE FOR THE CELESTIALS' EVENTUAL **FOURTH HOST**, WHICH WOULD JUDGE HUMANITY, COIN CREATED **THE DESTROYER**, AN INVINCIBLE SUIT OF ARMOR IMBUED WITH POWER BY THE COUNCIL OF GODHEADS.



IN ASIA, THE MONGOL EMPIRE EVOLVED INTO THE SECRET SOCIETY KNOWN AS THE **ATLAS FOUNDATION**. EACH ATLAS LEADER--BENT ON WORLD DOMINATION-- WAS A DESCENDANT AND RIGHTFUL HEIR TO GENGHIS KHAN, WHOSE BLOODLINE CONTINUED INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

DIABLO WAS NOT THE ONLY ALCHEMIST TO TRADE WITH DEMONS. IN ITALY, THE SORCERER BELASCO ATTEMPTED TO ENABLE THE MABDHARA DEMONS TO CROSS INTO OUR DIMENSION. IN RETURN GAINING GREAT MAGICAL POWER AND NEAR-INVULNERABILITY AND IMMORTALITY BUT CURSED WITH A DEMONIC APPEARANCE.

IN THE MYSTIC CITY OF KAMAR-TAJ IN THE AREA NOW KNOWN AS TIBET, TWO MEN--YAO AND KALUU--EXPLORED THE SECRETS OF SORCERY. IN TIME, KALUU TURNED ON HIS PEOPLE, AND YAO BARELY MANAGED TO DEFEAT HIM.

GALAXIES AWAY, HAVING TURNED TO INHABITED WORLDS TO CONSUME, I WAS OPENLY DEFIED FOR THE FIRST TIME BY A BRAVE SOUL, MORRIN RAPP OF THE PLANET ZENN-LA.

BEGUN IN ENGLAND AS AN ELITE SOCIAL GROUP, THE HELLFIRE CLUB PROGRESSED INTO A WORLDWIDE ORGANIZATION THAT WIELDED VAST POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE. IN AMERICA, FOLLOWING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, THE FIRST INNER CIRCLE MEMBERS WERE ASSIGNED THE TITLES OF CHESS PIECES, ITS LEADERS KINGS AND QUEENS.

ORIGINALLY A PURELY HUMAN GROUP, THE HELLFIRE CLUB WAS SLOWLY INFILTRATED AND CONQUERED BY VARIOUS SUPER-POWERED MUTANTS.



YAO THEREAFTER DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO THE STUDY OF MAGIC, ULTIMATELY BECOMING EARTH'S SORCERER SUPREME. ETERNITY GRANTED HIM THE ALL-SEEING ARTIFACT CALLED THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO AND YAO EVENTUALLY BECAME KNOWN AS THE ANCIENT ONE.

PRINCE VLAD DRACULA OF TRANSYLVANIA PAID FOR HIS RUTHLESS PERSECUTION OF THE TURKISH PEOPLE WHEN A ROMANI WOMAN TRANSFORMED HIM INTO A VAMPIRE. THIS DID NOTHING TO ABATE HIS VIOLENT NATURE.

IN TIME, DRACULA ENHANCED HIS OWN BLOOD WITH THAT OF VARNAE, GIVING HIM FAR GREATER POWERS THAN ANY OTHER VAMPIRE.

IN EXCHANGE FOR SPARING ZENN-LA, RADO AGREED TO LEAVE FOREVER AND SERVE AS MY HERALD, SEEKING OUT OTHER WORLDS TO SUSTAIN ME.

IMBUING HIM WITH A SMALL FRACTION OF MY POWER COSMIC, I TRANSFORMED RADO INTO THE SILVER SURFER.

AFTER LONDONER NATHANIEL ESSEX LOST HIS YOUNG SON TO BIRTH DEFECTS, HE DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO BIOLOGICAL AND GENETIC EXPERIMENTATION IN HOPES OF PERFECTING THE HUMAN RACE'S EVOLUTION.

ESSEX'S MENTOR APOCALYPSE USED MUTANT GENETIC MATERIAL TO EVOLVE ESSEX INTO SUPERHUMAN FORM. HE ADOPTED THE NEW NAME MR. SINISTER.

IN YOUNG AMERICA, LAWLESSNESS SWEEP ACROSS THE WESTERN FRONTIERS. A NUMBER OF GUNGLINGERS--AMONG THEM KID COLT, THE RAWHIDE KID, THE TWO-GUN KID AND THE GHOST RIDER--TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE OF PROTECTING THE WEAK AND INNOCENT.



NORTH, IN ALBERTA, CANADA, THE WEALTHY JOHN AND ELIZABETH HOWLETT PARENTED A SON.

THE FRAIL BOY JAMES HOWLETT WAS UNAWARE THAT HIS TRUE FATHER WAS THEIR ABUSIVE GROUNDSKEEPER, THOMAS LOGAN.

DESPITE HIS WEAK AND TIMID CHILDHOOD, JAMES WOULD GROW UP TO BECOME FIERCE AND STRONG BEYOND IMAGINING.



TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT



McNIVEN
FACINOR

HISTORY OF THE MARVEL #1 ANNOTATIONS

Design: Stacie Zucker

FIRST CONFIRMED BIG BANG



SECOND CONFIRMED BIG BANG



There have been two confirmed Big Bangs: The first occurred when the original iteration of reality was destroyed during a civil war among the enigmatic and powerful Celestials, resulting in the second reality and first Multiverse (a group of alternate universes). The second confirmed Big Bang occurred at the end of the sixth reality when a ship from that reality collided with the Alpha/Omega (an object containing all potential energy and matter); the resulting explosion created the seventh reality. *Silver Surfer #10* (2017) and *Ultimates² #6* (2017).



Abstracts are nonphysical conceptual beings who employ living fractals from the Dimension of Manifestations to fashion a physical appearance to interact with physical beings. Among known Abstracts are the four pillars of reality: Eternity, Infinity, Death and Oblivion. Above them stands the Living Tribunal (the embodiment of arbitration and judgment) and the One-Above-All (which is believed to be responsible for all life). Much of our understanding of the Abstracts comes from the first few pages of *Quasar #20* (1991).



When all matter of the sixth iteration of reality began collapsing, scientist **Galan** of **Taa** boarded a spaceship and flew directly into the point of collapse to seek what existed outside of time and space. However, Galan was instead filled with cosmic energy when his ship survived the death of his reality. When his ship collided with the Alpha/Omega (depicted on page 4), the second confirmed Big Bang occurred (birthing the seventh iteration of reality). After untold billions of years the ship crashed on an unidentified planet. There, the energy being formerly known as Galan transformed his ship into an incubator and launched it back into space, spending countless centuries evolving within (depicted on page 5). *Silver Surfer #10* (2017), *Super-Villain Classics #1* (1983) and *Thor #169* (1969).





One recorded origin of the Infinity Gems tells of a solitary, omnipotent being ending its life to escape loneliness. From the ashes of this being rose all of reality; the being's power was reincarnated as gems that control the mind, power, time, the soul, space and reality. How this origin is reconciled with other creation accounts has yet to be revealed. *Thanos Quest #1-2* (1990).



The greatly feared Phoenix Force is allegedly the nexus of all psionic energy that has, does or ever will exist; its primary purpose is to burn away anything deemed obsolete and regrow it as it sees fit. *Classic X-Men #8* (1987), *Classic X-Men #43* (1990) and *Fantastic Four #286* (1986) first revealed much of what is known about the Phoenix Force.



Among the earliest beings to evolve into existence were the Acanti, peaceful beings who have roamed space since creation began in their quest for knowledge. They can exist in the vacuum of space and travel at speeds faster than light. The Acanti first appeared in *Uncanny X-Men #166* (1983).



In *Silver Surfer #4* (1987) the being called the Grandmaster relayed the origin of the Elders of the Universe: Each is the vastly powerful surviving member of their own race (which are reported to be among the earliest races to exist), and the secret of their near-immortal existences is their abiding interest in a specific aspect of their lives (e.g., collecting, gambling, gardening). *Avengers #28* (1966) was the first appearance of an Elder; *Avengers #174* (1978) was the first mention of the group.



Believed to have been a wedding gift between two gods worshipped by the avian Shi'ar race, the M'kraan Crystal serves as a housing unit for the Crystal Heart of Reality, a nexus of all that is and ever was that allows access to other realities and worlds. The planet where the crystal resides (the World) is believed to be the first planet that brought forth life in the universe. The crystal and planet first appeared in *X-Men #107-109* (1977).



Eon is allegedly the offspring of Eternity (the embodiment of time) and was one of the first sentient entities formed following the second confirmed Big Bang. His mission of shepherding all life in existence and his role of appointing the Protectors of the Universe were detailed in *Captain Marvel #29* (1973) and *Quasar #2* (1989).



FIRST FIRMAMENT



Ultimates #6 (2017) revealed that the giant, enigmatic Celestials came into existence when the first iteration of reality—the First Firmament—created them to counter its extreme loneliness. The activities of the Celestials between the death of the first cosmos and their mysterious labors in the seventh cosmos—using their vast powers to perform experiments on countless species to apparently foster evolution—are unrevealed. The Celestials first appeared in *Eternals* #2 (1976).



The vile, insectoid Brood's hunger and procreation method drove them to conquer other races by parasitically implanting eggs into hosts that eventually transform into Brood when the embryo hatches. Some time before Earth formed, the Brood enslaved the Acanti race, using them as a mobile food source in their quest to infest the universe. The Brood first appeared in *Uncanny X-Men* #155 (1982), and their enslavement of the Acanti was recounted in *Uncanny X-Men* #166 (1983).



The virtually omniscient and immortal Watchers took an oath of passive observation after their altruistic gift of atomic energy eventually resulted in the Proslitan race developing nuclear weapons and destroying themselves. Watchers are stationed throughout all of existence, silently watching and recording multiple planes of reality; their pooled knowledge is then entered into the *Cyclopedia Universum* information database. The first Watcher (Uatu) appeared in *Fantastic Four* #13 (1963), the race's origin is recounted in *Tales of Suspense* #53 (1964), and the *Cyclopedia Universum* is first seen in *Fantastic Four* #544 (2007).

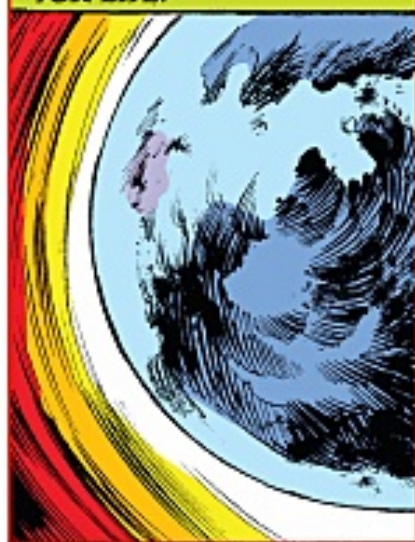


Super-Villain Classics #1 (1983) and *Thor* #169 (1969) depict the energy being formerly known as Galan emerging from his incubator as Galactus. However, he was forced to exit his incubator prematurely due to attacks from aggressive warring civilizations. Galactus emerged as a vastly powerful being whose immense hunger could only be sated through the consumption of the life energy of entire planets. The first planet to be consumed by Galactus was Archeopia. During the millennia it took him to create a solar system-sized ship (*Taa II*), Galactus became one of the most feared beings in existence.

BEHOLD ONE SUCH PLANET, NOT LONG AFTER IT LEFT THE WOMB OF ITS SUN... A PLANET THAT WOULD ONE DAY BE NAMED EARTH.



A VERY SPECIAL PLANET WAS EARTH, POSSESSING A RICH, FERTILE BIOSPHERE SEETHING WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR LIFE.



AS THE OCEANS COOLED, AND CRAGGY ROCK THRUST ABOVE THE ROUGH SEAS, THE AIR ABOVE THE EARTH CRACKLED WITH POWER AND LIFE-ENERGY...



Over the passage of time, matter continued to form stars and planets. One such planet possessed a rich, fertile biosphere filled with the potential for life. This planet would eventually come to be known as Earth. The formation of Earth was depicted in *Silver Surfer Annual* #2 (1989) and *Thor Annual* #10 (1982).

DEMIURGE



THUS CAME TO BE THE DEMIURGE, THE SENTIENT LIFE-FORCE OF EARTH'S BIOSPHERE.



...ENGINEERING THE FIRST FORMS OF ETHEREAL LIFE WHICH SPREAD FULL-GROWN FROM THE GROUND--

"BEINGS WHO WOULD BE CALLED ELDER GODS--

BEING LIKE CHTHON.

GAEA.

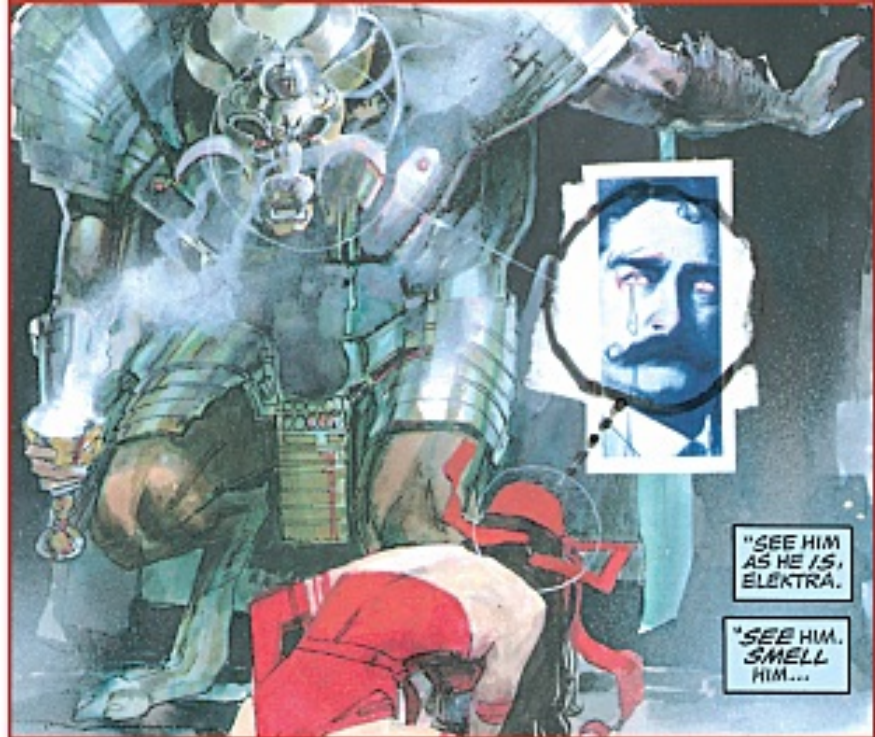
SET.

...AND INNUMERABLE OTHERS.

As the Earth cooled, energy within the atmosphere eventually became sentient. This sentient energy became known as the Demiurge and seeded the planet with potential life force. From the primeval mud came the first life on Earth, the Elder Gods. Among them were the benevolent Gaea, the kind and noble mystic Oshur, the demonic Chthon and the serpentine Set. After Set committed Earth's first murder, the Elder Gods degenerated into demons. Eventually, Atum—the son of Gaea and the Demiurge—slew the Elder Gods, except Gaea (who eventually became Mother Earth), Oshur (who had departed to explore other realms) and the escaping Chthon and Set. Before he left, Chthon wrote his vast knowledge of dark magic on parchments that would eventually imperil Earth. The Elder Gods' history is summarized in the last story in *Silver Surfer Annual* #2 (1989).



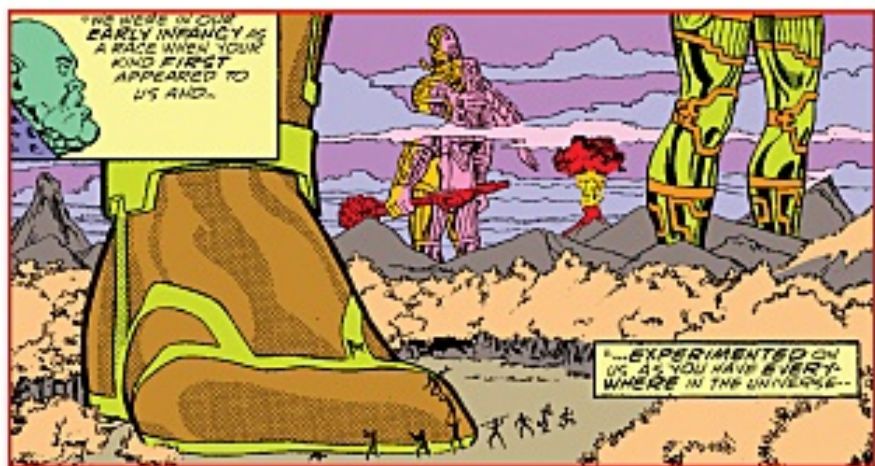
The Ten Realms are the major inhabited realms of Asgardian cosmology. All but Heaven, which was cut off from the others after a war with Asgard, are connected by Yggdrasil, an energy system represented by a tree and roots in Asgardian mythology. This representation of the Axis Mundi (the "Center of the World," where all things meet) is seen differently by all. According to Asgardian mythology, the realms were created billions of years ago through the actions of various Asgardians and beings from the realms. Earth (Midgard) was made by Odin Borson and his brothers from the corpse of a Frost Giant. Whether this alternate tale of Earth's creation is accurate remains unrevealed. A summary of the Ten Realms can be found in *Thor* #7 (2015).



Another demon to exist on early Earth is the **Beast**, a nihilistic, murderous creature who longed to return Earth to its peaceful, quiet, dark state by annihilating all living beings, which it sees as a corruption of purity. Much of the Beast's origin and early activities remain unrevealed, but its motivation was revealed by the Beast itself in *Elektra: Assassin* #7 (1987).



Prior to the Demiurge's seeding of the planet, the Celestial **Progenitor** crashed on Earth due to an infection by cosmic locusts called the Horde. After its death four billion years ago, the Celestial's blood and rotting flesh seeped into the planet, making Earth a unique breeding ground for potential superhuman events and beings. The sad story of this Celestial (also called Celestial Zero) can be found in *Avengers* #5 (2018).



Furthering their enigmatic agenda, the Celestials experimented upon a reptilian race in the Andromeda/M31 Galaxy, leaving one branch of that race laced with unstable molecules that enabled shape-shifting. Over several millennia, this Skrull branch became the dominant branch of the race and one of the greatest interstellar empires through trade. The Celestials' experimentations on the Skrulls were revealed in *Silver Surfer* #5 (1987).



Billions of years ago, the other-dimensional Beyonders contracted the extraterrestrial Nuwali to create a game preserve on what would become Earth's Antarctica landmass, gathering into it the flora and fauna of the time. After millions of years, both the Beyonders and the Nuwali abandoned the zoo, but the technology established to maintain the environment continues working to this day. The origins of this **Savage Land** can be found in *Ka-Zar the Savage* #31 and #34 (1984).



What started as a single avian race billions of years ago would be shaped by the secret and enigmatic Fraternity of Raptors into the most powerful and largest empire in the known universe. Over the many centuries of the empire's rise, the race evolved away from their wings, though the majority of the Shi'ar race still have feathers instead of hair. The age of the **Shi'ar Empire** is confirmed in *Avengers* #378 (1994), *Infinity Countdown: Darkhawk* #3 (2018) and *Uncanny X-Men* #478 (2006).



Fantastic Four #205-206, #208-209 (1979), *Nova* #1 (1976) and *Rom* #24 (1981) detail the ancient history of Xandarian **Living Computers** (later the Worldmind) and the Nova Corps. The Living

Computers—the cumulative knowledge, art, culture and minds of all deceased Xandarians—empowered the planet's militia with the Nova Force, granting them numerous super-powers. Gradually, the Nova Corps would come to serve as law enforcement across the universe.



Millions of years ago, the Progenitors (no relation to Celestial Zero) experimented on the primitive Kree race, advancing their evolution through exposure to a substance called Primagen. Over the following centuries, blue- and pale-skinned Kree would develop into another powerful empire in the universe. The Progenitors' experiments were revealed in *Royals* #9 (2017).



When the Skrulls (shown above left) came to Hala to offer their advanced technology in exchange for resources, they proposed a contest between the planet's two races. The primitive Kree destroyed their rivals, the plantlike Cotati, in order to win the contest. When the Skrulls objected to this barbarism, the Kree slew the Skrull party and seized their ship. Later, after mastering Skrull tech, the Kree (shown above right) attacked the Skrull world, prompting the peaceful Skrulls to adopt aggression and war. The resulting conflict—the Kree-Skrull War—was waged for millennia. The start of the war was first explained in *Avengers* #133-134 (1975).

"WHEN THE ANALYSIS IS COMPLETE, ZIRAN PROCEEDS TO THE NEXT PHASE OF HIS TESTING. WITH CONSUMMATE PRECISION, ZIRAN IRRADIATES A SINGLE SERIES OF DNA MOLECULES WITHIN THE CREATURE, ALTERING THE ANIMAL'S GENETIC BLUEPRINT."



"NO MERE CAPRICE IS THIS. RATHER, ZIRAN TESTS THE BEING FOR ADAPTABILITY."

"IN THIS MANNER, THE DAWN APE BECAME THE COMMON ANCESTOR OF THREE POWERFUL NEW SPECIES..."

"THE **DEVARIANT!** AN EVER-CHANGING AND DESTRUCTIVE FAILURE."



STRUCTURALLY UNSTABLE, EACH NEW GENERATION OF DEVIANT APPEARED IN NEW AND MONSTROUS WAYS. HIS LOT WAS CONSTANT WAR.

"THE **HUMAN!** THIS SPECIES BREED WITH TRUE BALANCE OF STRUCTURE AND DISPOSITION. ALTHOUGH HE WAS A DESTROYER, THE HUMAN WAS CAPABLE OF BUILDING FOR PEACE."



HIS KIND WAS DESTINED TO INHERIT THE EARTH. HE BELONGED TO IT.

"THE **ETERNAL!** HE WAS MORE A CHILD OF THE GODS THAN OF EARTH... HE REACHED FOR THE UNIVERSE!"



THE ETERNALS BREED FEW IN NUMBER AND WERE IMMUNE TO TIME AND DEATH. LIKE THE GODS, THEY LIVED APART FROM ALL OTHER LIVING BEINGS.

When the Celestials visited Earth en masse (the First Host), they experimented on Earth's anthropoids, creating the cosmically powered Eternals and their hated rivals, the genetically unstable Deviants. They also instilled a latent superhuman gene in a third group that would eventually grow into Earth's dominant species: humanity. *Eternals* #1 (1977), *Eternals* #1 (2006) and *What If?* #23 (1980).



1,200,000 years ago, the Celestial named Zgreb the Aspirant came to Earth while seeking its fellow Celestial, the Progenitor. After becoming infected by the Horde, Zgreb became deranged, forcing Odin Borson to gather super-beings of that time—collectively calling themselves the Avengers—to prevent him from harming Earth. *Avengers* #1-6 (2018-2019) and *Marvel Legacy* #1 (2017).



The Kree's plan to create a super-army to aid in their conquests included experimenting on sentient species around the universe, including the Badoon, Centaurians and Kymellians. Thousands of years later, the Kree performed their experiments on Earth's early man, creating another branch of super-beings there. All these intergalactic races would come to be known as the Inhumans. On Earth, the Inhumans became an advanced culture and, centuries later, they would establish a vast, futuristic city called Attilan. *Fantastic Four* #577 (2010) and *What If?* #28 (1980).



An example of Earth's early progenitors of the Cro-Magnons, **Tuk the Caveboy** and his parents were exiled for unrevealed reasons from the technologically advanced Attilan (not to be confused with the Inhumans' city). After his parents were slain by wild beasts, Tuk was raised by one of the "Shaggy Ones" and went on to travel and have adventures in prehistoric Earth's developing realms. *Captain America Comics* #1-5 (1941).



When an alien Ploex ship crashed on Earth, it sent a mental summons compelling native life to travel to the ship. A primitive man, Eshu, survived the travels only to be captured by the Ploex ship and vivisected to obtain genetic information to further the race's intended conquering of Earth. However, over the next 30,000 years, Eshu's brain gradually gained control of the ship and built a perfect body for him, becoming the would-be **Master of the World**. *Alpha Flight* #2-4 (1983).

ONE OF THEIR NUMBER, CALLED **VARNAE**, SUBMITTED HIMSELF TO HIS COHORTS' RITUAL SACRIFICE BECAUSE HE WAS ALREADY DYING.

AND DIE HE DID.



BUT THREE DAYS LATER, HE ROSE FROM HIS GRAVE AS A VAMPIRE--

--THE FIRST TO WALK A TREMBLING EARTH!

During a war against Valusia's King Kull, sorcerers of the continent Atlantis used Chthon's evil parchments to seek magical weapons. One of their efforts transformed a gravely wounded Atlantean *Gigantopithecus* named Varnae into Earth's first vampire, unleashing a plague of undead upon Earth that would last into modern times. *Doctor Strange: Sorcerer Supreme* #11 (1989).

IT WAS ONE OF ITS KIND, BUT ITS TERRIBLE POWER SHOOK THE WORLD--ITS FIRES LEAPED FROM ONE CONTINENT TO ANOTHER AND TURNED THEM INTO BLEAZING BURN--



When the Celestials returned to Earth (the Second Host) they were attacked by the Deviants, who had become the dominant species. In 18,000 B.C., the Celestials fired back in retaliation, causing entire continents to sink beneath the waves and killing millions in an event that would be called the **Great Cataclysm**. During the devastation, it is believed Atlantean sorcerers saved some of the population by magically turning them into water-breathers, creating the underwater-dwelling direct ancestors of the *Homo mermanus* (Atlantean) race; however, some attribute the creation of this race to the Olympian god of the sea, Neptune. The Great Cataclysm was depicted in *Eternals* #2 (1976) and *Sub-Mariner* #62-64 (1973), and the wizards' transformation of the water-breathers was revealed in *Incredible Hercules* #123 (2008).

HIS NASCENT CONSCIOUSNESS TAPPED THE GODSTUFF BEQUEATHED THE WORLD BY ATUM AND BEHOLD, NEW GODS WERE BORN IN MAN'S IMAGE...



Over the eons after Atum destroyed the Elder Gods, mankind's nascent consciousness tapped into the "godstuff" laced through creation, gradually causing new gods to be born in man's image. Among these beings were the *Asgardian* and *Olympian* pantheons. *Thor Annual* #10 (1982).



The *Marvel Tarot* #1 (2007) details the first confirmed time the role of Earth's Sorcerer Supreme was passed to another. Agamotto relinquished the title to Shmagat Saraswati, who was from a race of winged people (Bird Men) created by the noble mystic Oshtur to counter the evil Serpent Men and Wolf Men created by the demonic Chthon. Saraswati has not been depicted in the Marvel Universe; shown here is Agamotto's "true" form.



Much later, a central European tribe believed a newborn child was destined for godhood. Over the child's early years, the tribe members sacrificed themselves to her hunger for life force. The apparently immortal, vampire-like mutant (*Homo superior*) who would eventually become known as *Selene* began a quest for power that would continue into the modern day. Her birth was depicted in *X-Necrosha* #1 (2009).



The Bloodgem was created prior to the start of the seventh iteration of reality by an ancient race of gods who sought to conquer other dimensions. Surviving the Big Bang, the gem found its way to Earth by 8250 B.C. Some time later, a hunter attacked the gem after its energies killed his tribe. When the gem shattered during his attack, a fragment embedded itself in the hunter's chest, granting him immortality. As *Ulysses Bloodstone*, the hunter began a centuries-long war against monsters. His pursuit of the monster Giganto gave rise to Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*. Ulysses Bloodstone's origin was told in *Marvel Presents* #2 (1975).



Around 6000 B.C., two factions of *Homo mermanus* colonized the ruins of the city of Atlantis, which had been underwater for thousands of years following the Great Cataclysm. Atlantis' new residents called themselves Atlanteans, dedicated the city to their god, Neptune, and began welcoming immigrants. *Saga of the Sub-Mariner* #1 (1988) and *Sub-Mariner* #64-66 (1973).



After becoming a distinct society, Earth's Inhumans founded the advanced city of *Attilan* in the North Atlantic Ocean (depicted on page 11). Beneath it, they discovered rare Terrigen Crystals, which could unlock the Kree-given superhuman potential in their DNA and cause unpredictable transformations. Around 2000 B.C., the dull-witted Alpha Primitive clones were genetically created to serve as Attilan's manual labor force. Hundreds of years later, Inhuman King Black Bolt (Blackagar Boltagon) moved Attilan to a remote section of the Himalayas to hide his people from the rapidly developing outside world. *Fantastic Four* #47 (1966), *Thor* #146-152 (1967) and *What If?* #29-30 (1981).



When a meteor crashed into Wakanda, a small African nation, the Wakandans mined the ore and learned to use it in their spearheads. This vibration-absorbing ore—named *Vibranium*—was significant in helping Wakanda become one of the most scientifically and technologically advanced countries on Earth. The meteor's impact was depicted in *Black Panther* #7 (1978).



Thanks to experiments performed by the Eternal named Kronos (which caused him to ascend to a higher plane of existence), the Eternals learned how to merge into a single, powerful psychic entity called the Uni-Mind. Doing so revealed that the majority of the people chose Kronos' son Zuras as the Prime Eternal after Kronos' ascendance. *What If? #25* (1981).



To avoid division among the Eternals, Zuras' brother A'Lars chose not to challenge Zuras' rule and exiled himself from Earth. Eventually, A'Lars came across Titan, a moon of Saturn, and found a destroyed Eternals settlement created by his uncle, Uranos, who had been exiled from Earth some time before. There, A'Lars found only Sui-San had survived clashes between Uranos' followers; the two became consorts. *Captain Marvel #29* (1973).



After developing Titan into a technological wonderland and using genetic engineering and cloning to repopulate the moon, A'Lars (now called Mentor) and Sui-San had two sons: the charismatic Eros and his older brother, Thanos, who was born with a monstrous appearance thanks to a disorder called the Deviant Syndrome. As they grew, Thanos' nihilistic nature led him to commit the first murder in this society and to secretly fall in love with and worship Death, the embodiment of mortality. While Eros' birth has not been depicted, Thanos' arrival can be found in *Thanos Rising #1-5* (2013).



Leaving their peaceful planet of Kakaranathara to seek worlds to conquer, the alien dragon who would become known as Fin Fang Foom and his fellow Dragon Lords used ten incredibly powerful rings to control their ship. However, the ship crash-landed on Earth in what would become China. After being attacked by humans, Fin Fang Foom entered the Valley of the Dragons, establishing it as his home base. From there, Fin Fang Foom had various conflicts with Earth's humans and superhumans over the subsequent centuries. Fin Fang Foom's origin was told in *Iron Man #272* (1991).



Frustrated with societal complacency in a utopian 31st century, Nathaniel Richards created time-travel machinery housed within a Sphinx facade and traveled to ancient Egypt of 2950 B.C. planning to make it his base as he looted weaponry from various time periods. There, Richards used futuristic weaponry to reign for a decade as the Pharaoh Rama-Tut. Traveling forward in time, Nathaniel became the Scarlet Centurion and then Kang. Continued time travel led to numerous divergent Nathaniels, including Iron Lad. The final incarnation of Nathaniel became Immortus, ruler of Limbo. The beginnings of the extensive Nathaniel Richards saga can be found in *Fantastic Four #19* (1963).



Born in ancient Egypt, a child with gray skin and mutated features was left to die in the desert. The infant was found by nomads whose leader sensed potential power in the child and decided to raise it as his own. The child was named En Sabah Nur and raised to believe "the strong will survive." Over time, En Sabah Nur's mutant power to adapt his molecular structure and his strong will helped him become the dreaded conqueror named Apocalypse; later incorporation of Celestial technology enabled him to extend his life for thousands of years. The beginning of Apocalypse's life was told in *Rise of Apocalypse #1-4* (1996-1997).



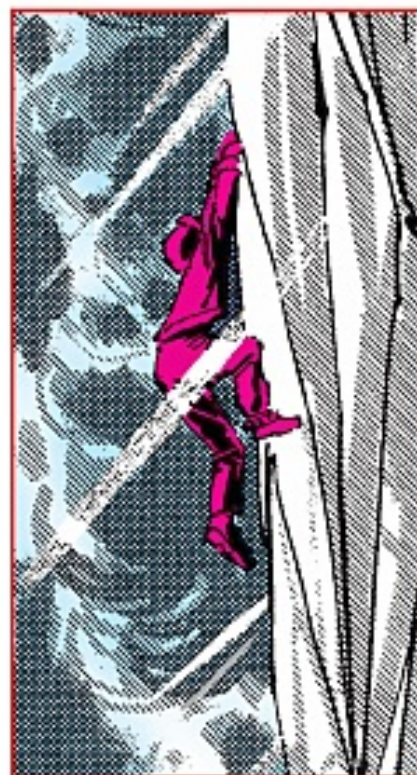
When the vile Brood parasites staged an invasion of Earth, a warrior named Imhotep led warriors (including En Sabah Nur) in war against them. After personally killing the Brood queen in 2620 B.C., Imhotep helped found the Brotherhood of the Shield, an organization that served to safeguard humanity from anything that threatened it. *S.H.I.E.L.D. #1* (2010).

"THE TEMPLE BECKONED ME TO ENTER, AND SO, CAUTIOUSLY, I DID, THEN THROUGH AN AMBER HAZE, I SOMEHOW SAW IT... IT GLOWED LIKE A FIRE IN THE NIGHT."



"I REACHED OUT TO THE BURNING JEWEL, TOOK IT INTO MY HANDS AND SOMEHOW IT SPOKE TO ME."

In the 14th century B.C., Anath-Na Mut was an Egyptian court wizard who was banished for losing a magical challenge to Moses. After wandering the desert for 90 years, Mut found the powerful Ka Stone and placed it on his brow, gaining vast reality-altering and energy-manipulating powers as well as eternal life. Over the subsequent centuries, Mut traversed the world and gained knowledge by absorbing it from others' minds, eventually coming to long for death. Mut became a crime lord known as the **Sphinx** in modern times. Mut's origin was told in *Fantastic Four* #212 (1979) and *Nova* #6-7 (1977).



Founded to keep evil in check, the **Chaste** demands their members to be of astounding physical abilities and mental purity; any acolyte must survive the scaling of a massive, near-unscalable cliff to reach the Chaste's base to be considered for membership. Over time, the Chaste has become the archenemy of the demon-worshipping Hand. An early glimpse into the Chaste was provided in *Daredevil* #190 (1983).



The origins of the mysterious group called the **Hand** can be traced back nearly four billion years in Japan when the worshippers of the demon-god **Beast** vowed to dishonor God by destroying his creations. Over the centuries, the Hand has become a vast ninja assassin and mercenary guild that has mastered bringing the dead back to life. The beginnings of the Hand are told in *Elektra: The Hand* #1-5 (2004).



Desiring an heir of great power, Asgardian all-father **Odin Borson** sought out **Gaea** (Mother Earth), and together they conceived a son who would grow to become **Thor**, God of Thunder, and one of the greatest heroes of both Asgard and Earth. *Thor Annual* #11 (1983).



Romulus Augustulus (known to his foes as **Tyrannus**) was the last emperor of the Roman Empire. When he failed to overthrow King Arthur Pendragon, he was subsequently banished to the underground world of Subterranea. There, he found a fountain of youth and became ruler of a race of Subterranean slaves abandoned by the Deviants. His efforts to conquer the surface world continue today. Although yet to be depicted, Tyrannus' birth and childhood were briefly referenced in the second story of *Avengers Annual* #20 (1990).



In 114 A.D., Zhang Heng of the Brotherhood of the Shield confronted a Celestial and convinced her to give birth within the Sun rather than at the center of Earth, which would destroy the planet. This interaction was shown in *S.H.I.E.L.D. #1* and *#4* (2010).



The life of **Merlin** is shrouded in mystery and misinformation, much of which has been spread by the man himself in his efforts to maintain the advantage over his opponents. Among what is known is his service to King Arthur Pendragon of Camelot and as the **Sorcerer Supreme of the Middle Ages**. While his taking that role has not been depicted, it was confirmed in *Doctor Strange and the Sorcerers Supreme #1-2* (2016). Shown here is a form he has assumed in modern times, one of numerous guises he has created over the centuries.



While the actual founding of the legendary Camelot has not yet been recorded in the Marvel Universe, various exploits have shown that the significant moments of King Arthur Pendragon, his Knights of the Round Table and his rule in the late fifth and early sixth centuries seem to follow those recorded in medieval folklore. The earliest Marvel depiction of Camelot is believed to be *Young Allies #11* (1944), while *Black Knight #1* (1955) and *Iron Man #150* (1981) contain more in-depth tales set in that land.



To better protect King Arthur Pendragon, Sir Percy of Scandia adopted the persona of a timid fop at the insistence of Merlin so that no one would suspect he was actually one of the greatest knights of Camelot—the **Black Knight**. Among Arthur's greatest enemies were his half sister, Morgan Le Fay, and illegitimate son, Mordred the Evil. *Black Knight #1* (1955) and *Mystic Arcana: Black Knight #1* (2007) hold depictions of the Black Knight's tale.



Half sister to King Arthur Pendragon, Morgan Le Fay was trained in sorcery by the legendary Merlin but frequently used her powers to try to conquer Britain rather than serve Camelot. Among her deeds was gathering the Elder God Chthon's magical scrolls and binding them together as the **Darkhold**, a dangerous book of evil that survives today. Morgan Le Fay's creation of the **Darkhold** can be found in *Avengers #241* (1984) and in the second story of *Doctor Strange: Sorcerer Supreme #11* (1989).



Esteban Corazón de Ablo was born in the ninth century in the Umayyad Caliphate, which is modern-day Zaragoza, Spain. Desiring the secrets of alchemy, de Ablo sold his soul to the demon Mephisto and mastered various black magics, eventually becoming the tyrant **Diablo**. Various potions have kept Diablo alive for centuries. *Alpha Flight #21* (1985) and *Fantastic Four #525* (2006).



THE COUNCIL OF GODHEADS



SKY-FATHERS ATTACK THE CELESTIAL ARISHEM



ODIN OVERSEES FORGING OF DESTROYER



ATLAS FOUNDATION CIRCA 1958

A successor to the Mongol Empire of the legendary thirteenth-century warlord Genghis Khan, the **Atlas Foundation** is a secret society based in advanced science and sorcery that has both sought world domination and used its covert influence for humanity's benefit over hundreds of years. An immortal dragon called Mr. Lao serves as an adviser to the Foundation's leader (Khan). The name of the Atlas Foundation was inspired by Mr. Lao's battle against a powerful genie in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco more than 700 years ago. While the history of the Atlas Foundation prior to the 1950s has yet to be visually depicted in the Marvel Universe, the details we do know were revealed in *Agents of Atlas #1-6* (2006-2007), *Agents of Atlas #1-11* (2009) and *Atlas #1-5* (2010).



BELASCO (PRE-TRANSFORMATION)

Belasco was an alchemist and sorcerer who sought to aid the demonic spawn of the Elder God Chthon in accessing Earth's dimension in exchange for immortality. After he was accused of heresy and sentenced to death by Florentine authorities in 1289 A.D., Belasco fled, kidnapping a woman he was enamored with. Pursued by a man who loved the woman, Belasco, now demonically transformed to have red skin, a tail and horns, found his way to the Savage Land, where he continued his service to his demonic masters. The man who pursued Belasco—Durante "Dante" Alighieri—later wrote about his ordeals against his demonic foe in *The Divine Comedy*. Belasco's origin can be found in *Ka-Zar the Savage #11-12* (1982).



Born in the 1430s, Yao served as an apprentice doctor in his Tibetan tribe before relocating to the Himalayan village of Kamar-Taj, where he studied sorcery. When a fellow villager named Kaluu seized control of Kamar-Taj with the help of the vampire Varnae, Yao fought back using sorcery, accidentally killing the population of Kamar-Taj while doing so. A guilt-ridden Yao dedicated his life to fighting those who would inappropriately use sorcery. Slowing his aging with magic, Yao had become Earth's Sorcerer Supreme by 1666; Yao was known as the **Ancient One** by 1939. Yao's birth has not been depicted, but his enmity with Kaluu and his claiming the Sorcerer Supreme role were detailed in the second stories in *Doctor Strange: Sorcerer Supreme #23* (1990) and *Strange Tales #148* (1966).



Wallachian prince Vlad Tepes Dracula was born in 1430 A.D. In 1459, Dracula was gravely wounded in a war against Turkey. Believing Dracula to be of strategic value, Turkish warlord Turac took him to a Romani healer instead of killing him. However, the healer, who was secretly a vampire, bit Dracula and turned him into a vampire. After passing tests set forth by the first vampire, Vamae, Dracula became Lord of Vampires. Dracula's bloody reign of terror continues to modern times. *Dracula Lives* #2-3 (1973) and the fourth story in *Bizarre Adventures* #33 (1982) provide much of Dracula's origins.



When the planet-devouring Galactus came to the utopian planet Zenn-La, the introspective and scholarly Norrin Radd offered to help seek other worlds for Galactus to consume in exchange for sparing Zenn-La. Galactus agreed, granting Radd vast cosmic powers and transforming him into a silver-skinned herald. Called the Silver Surfer for the flying board he rode, the Surfer served Galactus for hundreds of years, enjoying his exploration of the universe. The Silver Surfer's story is told in *Silver Surfer* #1 (1968).



The Further Adventures of Cyclops & Phoenix #1-4 (1996) reveal the origins of nineteenth-century biologist Nathaniel Essex, the man who would become the mad geneticist Mister Sinister. Essex became obsessed with Darwin's evolutionary theories after his son died from multiple ailments and birth defects. Academia rejected Essex for his lack of morals in researching humanity's capacity for mutation. Eventually swearing obedience to the ancient mutant Apocalypse, Essex was granted superhuman abilities and long life. Mister Sinister's twisted experiments continue today.



Among the legends of the Old West of the United States are the expert marksman and justice-seeking *Rawhide Kid*, the gun-fighting *Kid Colt*, the adventure-seeking *Two-Gun Kid* (secretly the Harvard-trained lawyer Matt Hawk) and the white-garbed vigilante *Phantom Rider* (Carter Slade), who used trickery to make others believe he was a ghost. Slade also rode as the *Night Rider* and the *Ghost Rider*. These men helped protect the innocent during the American westward expansion and are well known in the legends of the Old West still told today. Through time travel, the *Two-Gun Kid* has spent time in the modern era, striving to help the helpless alongside Earth's costumed superhumans. Some of the adventures of the Wild West heroes can be found in *Blaze of Glory* #1-4 (2000), *Ghost Rider* #1 (1967), *Kid Colt* #1-4 (2009) and *Rawhide Kid* #1-5 (2003).



The origins of the Marvel Universe's *Hellfire Club* are believed to mirror the historical Hellfire Club, which was founded in 1720 by Philip, Duke of Wharton, as a place for the elite to indulge in hedonism and debauchery. By the late 1780s in the Marvel Universe, the club had gone worldwide, its inner circles seeking power through political, economic, subversive and superhuman activities. Even today, members of the club traditionally wear eighteenth-century garb. Much of what is known of the club's history was revealed in *X-Men: Hellfire Club* #1-4 (2000).



James Howlett was born in Canada near the end of the nineteenth century. The sickly and frail boy was unaware his true father was not the kindly John Howlett Sr. but

instead the cruel Thomas Logan, who served the Howlett family as groundskeeper. When Logan killed Howlett Sr., the shock caused Howlett Jr.'s mutant claws to manifest. Fleeing his homestead, Howlett Jr. repressed his traumatic memories and began a nomadic life as Logan. Multiple subsequent traumas over the following years caused Logan to slip into a feral state occasionally, but he still served as a mercenary, a spy, a government operative and eventually the super hero known as *Wolverine*. *Origin* #1-6 (2001-2002).

STAN'S SOAPBOX

The next time anyone puts you down for reading a comic mag, try hitting him with this little soliloquy which I've used on various radio and TV guest appearances in the past few months:

Comic books are a medium of communication — just as television and motion pictures are. All three employ words and pictures, and all must be judged on their individual merits. A story is a story, whether presented between two covers, or on a screen. If the words have dramatic impact, if the pictures are visually appealing, if the theme is emotionally relevant, then certainly it is worthy of a reader's attention. However, if the quality is lacking, then it rates little consideration. Isn't this equally true of a TV program, a Broadway show, a motion picture, or any other form of entertainment? All we at Marvel ask is that our product be judged on the basis of quality — a quality which we sincerely believe is equal to that found in any other comparable media.

Marvel Comics today are produced by the finest creative talent available. Read them first . . . and then decide. Excelsior!

Smiley

And, STILL ON SALE—

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #2: The truth about the uncanny Green Goblin — in full, dazzling color!

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STAN LEE

FOREVER